

Message Text

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ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SS-14 PM-03 NSC-10 NSCE-00 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DODE-00 DPW-01 L-02 PRS-01

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R 031145Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

INFORUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 5530

USDEL JEC PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 14048

FOLLOWING MESSAGE SENT ACTION SAIGON INFO DAO SAIGON, USSAG NKP
THAILAND FROM BIEN HOA AUG 3 BEING REPEATED FOR YOUR INFO

QUOTE BIEN HOA 358

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PINT MILI VS

SUBJECT: MR3 SITREP- 3 AUGUST 1973

1. LEVEL OF MILITARY CLASHES DECLINED SLIGHTLY TO 40 IN 48 HOURS
ENDING 0800 AUGUST 3: 15 IN FIRST 24 HOURS AND 25 IN FINAL 24;
ONE COMBINED ATTACK BY FIRE AND GROUND CONTACT (140 ROUNDS AGAINST
A PF PLATOON IN HIEU THIEN OF TAY NINH, CAUSING NO PF CALUALTIES).
17 ATTACKS BY FIRE (ONE OVER 20 ROUNDS, NINE GROUND CONTACTS, EITHT
MINE/GRENADE DETONATIONS (ONE CIVILIANS), TWO SMALL ARMS HARRASS-
MENTS, TWO ACTS OF SABOTAGE (MINES ON THE TRAIN IN LONG
KHANH (15 KM W AND 7 KM E OF XUAN LOC, BOTH IN EARLY HOURS OF
AUGUST 1), AND ONE CONFISCATION OF TWO HAND TILLING MACHINES
FROM FARMERS WORKING THEIR FIELDS IN PHUOC TUY. GVN LOSSES
INCLUDED NINE KILLED (ONE CIVILIAN), 35 WOUNDED (ONE CIVILIAN),
FOUR M16'S LOST AND ONE 3/4 TON TRUCK DAMAGED BY ROCKET FIRE.
COMMUNIST LOSSES WERE REPORTED AS 14 KILLED, ONE CAPTURED, AND
ONE RALLIER. BINH DUONG HAD 10 INCIDENTS, HAU NGHIA EIGHT,
LONG KHANH SIX, GIA DINH THREE, TAY NINH, PHUOC TUY, BIEN HOA,
AND LONG AN TWO EACH, AND PHUOC LONG ONE.

2. COMMUNIST MINES ON RAILROAD TRACK IN LONG KHANH SERVED AS
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REMINDER OF DIFFICULTY OF MAINTAINING SECURITY ON THAT

PART OF TRACT WHICH IS ALREADY BEING USED, BETWEEN XUAN LOC AND SUIGON, AS WELL AS PROBLEM OF OPENING THE RAILROAD EASTWARD TO BINH TUY AND PHAN THIET. MOREOVER, GVN IS SO SHORT OF TROOPS IN LONG KHANH--BECAUSE OF THE 18TH DIVISION SPREADING OUT TO FIGHT IN PHU GIAO AND TO GARRISON INTERPROVINCIAL HIGHWAY 2 IN SOUTHERN LONG KHANH AND NORTHERN PHUOC TUY--THAT PROVINCE CHIEF COMPLAINED TO DEVELOPMENT OFFICER THAT HIS TERRITORIAL FORCES MUST PROVIDE SECURITY FOR 18TH'S BASE CAMPS IN PROVINCE.

3. PHUOC LONG PROVINCE CHIEF COL. LUU YEM TOLD CONSEL MORNING AUGUST 2 THAT HE WAS EXPECTING FIRST SHIPMENT OF 50,000 KILOS OF RICE TO ARRIVE BY ROAD IN SONG BE AT 1400 SAME DAY AFTER 900 KM TRIP VIA SAIGON-NHA TRANG-BAN ME THUOT-QUANG DUC-DUC PHONG. OTHER MILITARY AND CIVILIAN SUPPLIES WOULD FOLLOW IN NEXT SEVERAL DAYS. COL. YEM ADMITTED TRANSPORTATION COSTS WERE HIGH COMPARED WITH NORMAL 200 KM ROUTE WHICH IS NOW INTERDICTED BY 1A FIGHTING, AND THAT COMMUNISTS COULD BE EXPECTED TO TRY TO CUT THE NEW LONGER "LIFELINE" TO PHUOC LONG, BUT HE SAID FAILURE TO OPEN 1A AND UNCERTAINTY OF AIRLIFT TO PHUOC BINH LEFT HIM TO CHOOSE BUT TO ACT IMMEDIATELY. IF HE CANT FEED PEOPLE UNDER GVN CONTROL, PARTICULARLY MONTAGNARDS, THEY WILL LEAVE GVN AREA FOR THEIR OLD HOMES IN COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED BO DUC DISTRICT. MR3 G-2 LTC BINH TOLD DAO/RLO/USS MORNING AUGUST 3 THAT CONVOY OF 100 ARVN TRUCKS CARRYING MOSTLY RICE IS INDEED SOMEWHERE ALONG THIS LONG ROUTE TO SONG BE, BUT HE DID NOT INDICATE PRESENT LOCATION OR ETA. ROUTE IS SAID TO BE ENTIRELY SECURE, BUT INCLUDES BETOUR IN MR2 TO AVOID A COMMUNIST UNIT THOUGHT TO BE ON HIGHWAY 21.

4. CONGEN LOCAL EMPLOYEE IN PHUOC LONG REPORTS THAT COMMUNISTS HAVE SENT YEM A LETTER OFFERING TO STOP SHELLING PHUOC BINH AIRFIELD IF HE WILL GET OFF NATIONAL HIGHWAY 14 BETWEEN DONG XOAI AND ROUTE 311, NOW HELD BY THE 73RD AND 84TH RANGERS. MEANWHILE, PEOPLE TRAVELLING HIGHWAY 14 SAY THAT RANGER AND COMMUNIST UNITS ARE INTERSPERSED ALONG THE ROAD, AND THAT THE COMMUNISTS ARE SAYING THEIR COMMANDER HAS BEEN TALKING "SOLDIER TO SOLDIER" TO 73RD CO MAJ. THRIEU WHO WAS REPORTEDLY INVOLVED IN AN ACCOMMODATION WITH THE COMMUNISTS BEFORE THE HIGHWAY 14 OPERATION LAST MONTH FOR WHICH HE IS UNDER MILITARY SECURITY SERVICE INVESTIGATION. TALKS HAVE REPORTEDLY LED TO UNDERSTANDING IN WHICH RANGERS TELL COMMUNISTS WHEN AND WHERE THEY PLAN TO OPERATE SO COMMUNISTS CAN AVOID CONTACT, ALTHOUGH SOMETIMES THERE ARE CONTACTS WHEN

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SECTOR ORDERS AN OPERATION ABOUT WHICH RANGERS HAVE NOT HAD TIME TO WARN COMMUNISTS. COMMUNIST COMMANDER REPORTEDLY HAS TOLD HIS RANGER COUNTERPART THAT HE WILL LET RVNAF USE HIGHWAY 14 IF THEY INFORM COMMUNISTS IN ADVANCE FOR HOW LONG THEY WILL NEED IT AND HOW MANY VEHICLES AND PERSONNEL WILL USE IT, AND IF THEY GO UNARMED. COMMENT: WE CANNOT CONFIRM THAT 73RD RANGERS ARE COOPERATING WITH COMMUNISTS, BUT WE FIND IT QUITE PLAUSIBLE THAT COMMUNISTS ARE ATTEMPTING IT, AND TELLING PEOPLE IN PHUOC

LONG ABOUT IT. END COMMENT.

WALKINSHAW

UNQUOTE

MARTIN

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